

D R A F T
Meeting Minutes
Delaware Population Consortium
September 20, 2006
10:00 a.m.
Kent Co. Administration Building
Dover, DE

In Attendance:

Kelly Crumpley – Kent Co.
Derrick Lightfoot, AICP – City of Wilmington
Mike Mahaffie – State Planning Coordination
Ed Ratledge – University of Delaware

Don Berry – Department of Education
Javier Arce – DSHA
Barbara Gladders – Public Health
Ric Kautz – Sussex Co.

The meeting was called to order at approximately 10:15 a.m.

Review of Updated Projection Data

Ed distributed a draft of state and county control totals, components of change and age groupings that reflect the latest set of technical changes and are adjusted to the latest state estimates from the Census Bureau.

There was a discussion of the effect of new annual “bridged race measures” released by the Centers for Disease Control. Ed has mapped those to the DPC projections and found that they caused some shifts, particularly in the “Other” category, which has shrunk. He noted that most of the shift was to “White.” He added that this could have some effect on vital statistics work. There was also a change in some of the age distribution.

Don Berry asked how the updates might effect the projections of school-age populations. He said that he has noted an increase in student population in Kent County for this school year. He wonders if this is likely to continue.

Ed explained that, based on the CDC data, he would have had lower projections for Kent County. He has stuck with the DPC estimates and projections for now.

Ed asked the group to carefully review the draft control totals. Assuming that no major problems are found, the rest of the projections process is formula-based and can be completed fairly quickly.

There was a general discussion of the disconnect between perceived growth and what the data that are available lead the group to project. Ed noted that the data he has seen suggests a recent slowdown in development pressure and that that slowdown is lasting. He said that data from banks shows people are walking away from some of the larger real estate deals.

Ric Kautz added that he has seen several developments that have completed site-work but are not generating housing unit construction. Kelly Crumpley has also noted a slowdown in Kent County.

Ed explained that the slowdown is showing in the migration data. The current trend is still higher than the historic, long-term trend, but it is easing down. Sussex County, for example, had a peak of migration (not counting seasonal growth) in 1996 and has been slowing since. The trend, he said, is approaching the more sustainable, long-term norm.

Ed asked the county representatives to take a close look at the migration component and make sure that the change isn't forecast to slow too sharply.

Next Meeting

At was agreed to schedule the 2006 Annual Meeting for Wednesday, October 25, starting at 10:00 a.m. in Room 219 in the Haslet Armory.

Review of American Community Survey (ACS) Data

Ed noted that there are a number of issues that have come up regarding the recent release of ACS data. There has been confusion, based in part on the fact that the population data is only for household population and does not include group quarters and other parts of the population.

Ed added that even that data looks odd because the results of the ACS sample were force-matched to control totals in the Estimates Program. He said that what appears to be happening is that the housing unit estimates are probably too low in the housing units estimates and therefore they are low in the ACS.

He noted that users can depend on the distributions, medians and means in the ACS data but should take great care in using the actual "numbers."

Mike Mahaffie noted that area to area comparisons seem to work but that time period to time period comparisons are not appropriate. He added that future releases should be more useful, as the methodology matures.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 11:15 a.m.